

NORTH HILL HOUSE SCHOOL



SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

These local procedures are read alongside Aspris Policy, AOP06 Safeguarding Children in Education and AOP08 Safeguarding Adults. In addition, our policies and procedures reflect recent changes included in the updated government publications, including:

'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

'Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2024)'

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Safeguarding is a comprehensive term that refers to the practices of Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk. Previously this was referred to 'Child Protection and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults.'

At North Hill House School (NHH), safeguarding is at the forefront of all that we do. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- **Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge**
- **Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online**
- **Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development**
- **Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care**
- **Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes**

'Definition from 'KCSIE 2024' page 7'

North Hill House School fully recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all vulnerable children/young people.

As a member of staff, a volunteer, a partner, or a visitor, working with these potentially vulnerable young people, it is your duty to act upon, and report any safeguarding concern. It is everyone's responsibility to protect young people and to keep them safe.

All concerns **must** be reported to one of your Designated Safeguarding Leads and not discussed with any other member of staff. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their team will then decide regarding the next steps.

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Carly Brown – 07747757857, CarlyBrown@aspriscs.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Michael Pearce - 01373 466222, MichaelPearce@aspriscs.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Leigh Murray – 01373 466222, leighmurray@aspriscs.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sam Carey – 01373 466222, SamCarey@aspriscs.co.uk

Deputy safeguarding Lead: Matt Davis – 01373 466222, MatthewDavis@aspriscs.co.uk

You can also email the school safeguarding team at NHHSafeguardingTeam@Aspriscs.co.uk and a member of the team will direct your email to the most appropriate person.

Head Teacher: Michael Pearce - 01373 466222, MichaelPearce@aspriscs.co.uk

Regional Safeguarding Lead: Rebecca McArthur, Operations Director – RebeccaMcArthur@Aspriscs.co.uk

Aspris Executive Safeguarding Lead: Katie Dorrian – KatieDorrian@aspris.com

North Hill House School is in a local cluster of services, all of whom have Designated Safeguarding Leads, who can also be contacted, if needed. Contact details can be found within their individual local procedures, which are published on their websites.

If you have a safeguarding concern, which requires immediate and urgent action. For example, if someone is in immediate risk of harm or abuse (and you are unable to contact any of our Designated Safeguarding Leads), then you should contact either:

- ✓ Children's Social Care – 0300 123 2224 / email: childrens@somerset.gov.uk
- ✓ Adult Social Care – 0300 123 2224 / email: adults@somerset.gov.uk
- ✓ DSL Consultation Line 0300 123 3078
- ✓ Somerset Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team Service – 0300 123 2327
- ✓ Or the police

You will be able to discuss your concerns. If you report your concern through one of these alternative routes, you must still notify the DSL as soon as possible.

Reports to the Police for any safeguarding concerns should be made via:

- Emergencies dial 999
- For non-emergencies dial 101

Points to consider.

Our policy and procedure apply to all adults involved with supporting our young people and should be used in conjunction with other Aspris Children's Services documentation, as well as statutory documents such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

Key themes include:

- Ensuring we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and young people.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children and young people with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns
- Ensuring that children and young people who are at risk or have previously been a victim of abuse are supported effectively in accordance with their individual circumstances and needs.
- Establishing an environment where children and young people feel safe, are safe, make progress and thrive.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children and young people, all adults are well placed to observe safeguarding risks and concerns. North Hill House School will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children and young people feel secure, are encouraged to communicate, and are 'listened' to, in line with their own individual communication needs.
- Ensure children and young people know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities for children and young people to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe.
- Ensure children and young people are keeping themselves safe online.

- Offer a curriculum that supports our children and young people to learn about global, national, and local safeguarding themes so that they can be safe, responsible citizens and to make a positive contribution.

We will follow the procedures set out by Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and Southwest Child Protection Procedures (details for which are below) for our young people and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- Ensure we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for protection of vulnerable young people who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure every member of staff; agency / bank worker or volunteer knows the name of the DSL person/s responsible for safeguarding/child protection and their role in protecting our children and young people from abuse.
- Ensure all adults understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated members of staff responsible for protection of vulnerable young people.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding protection of vulnerable people including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns, actions and outcomes about children and young people.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main file for pupils, and in locked locations.
- Where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, we will follow the Southwest Child Protection Procedures.
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise that children and young people who are abused, or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation, and some sense of blame. Our setting may be the only stable, secure, and predictable element in the lives of children and young people at risk. When at school, their behaviour may be challenging, or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment and gives children and young people a sense of being valued.
- The school code of conduct on bullying and positive behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable children and young people in the school.
- Liaison with other external agencies that support the children and young people. Ensuring that, where a young person leaves, any safeguarding information is transferred to the new setting immediately. Ensuring there is unconditional high regard towards all children and young people from all staff.

Managing Disclosures – Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Be accessible.
- Listen carefully.

- Take it seriously.
- Reassure the child/young person, e.g., that they are right to tell you.
- Say what you will do next.
- Consult immediately with one of your Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Make clear and concise records.

Don't:

- React strongly to what you're told, e.g., "that's disgusting", pull faces when you find something upsetting, unpleasant.
- Jump to conclusions or speculate.
- Tell the child/young person you will keep it a secret.
- Ask leading questions.
- Make a promise you can't keep.
- Stop a child/young person who is freely speaking.
- Be judgemental.

Recording Guidelines

All safeguarding disclosures or concerns MUST be reported via the 'MIS Engage' portal and must be reported in line with Aspris Policy, AOP04 Incident Management, Reporting and Investigation.

The following should serve as a guideline of how to write and what to include in a written report following a disclosure made to you by a student. If you ever need to provide such a written report, ensure that it includes all the following:

- Write in black ink (your report may be used in a Court of Law)
- Make sure your record is legible and is on a clean piece of paper.
- State what was occurring prior to the disclosure (scene, setting, who was present)
- State the setting when the actual disclosure was made (scene, setting, who was present)
- State the names of anybody else who witnessed the disclosure, staff, pupils, others.
- Include an action plan of what you will do next, e.g. "I will report this to our designated safeguarding lead...."
- Your record states your decision about who to share the disclosure with and reflects the fact that you have told the student this information.
- Any error or amendment has one line struck through it and is annotated by you the author of the report (the original words must remain legible)
- There aren't any abbreviations, slang, or jargon.
- The date and time of the written report is clearly written on the record.
- The date and time of when the actual disclosure was made is clearly written on the record.
- As the author you sign the record and clearly print your name and your job title
- Judgements and assumptions are not made but you may state your professional opinion, but you must distinguish between fact and your opinion/judgement, e.g., state "In my professional opinion the bruise was not caused by accident even though that is what the pupil states".

Contact Details

For local guidance and information on child protection and safeguarding, refer to the Local Safeguarding Children Board - Southwest Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp>

Allegations against Members of Staff

Any allegations that are made against members of staff must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) unless the allegation in anyway implicates or concerns that person.

In this circumstance, adults must contact the Head Teacher: Michael Pearce – 01373 466222, or Regional Safeguarding Lead: Nancy O'Regan, Operations Director.

Any allegations involving members of staff must be reported by the school to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Anthony Goble or Stacey Davis. Reporting processes can be found here: <https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/working-with-children/allegations-management/>

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, they will be instructed not to discuss or communicate with other members of staff. This is because any discussion could jeopardise the investigation.

What is a low-level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at KCSIE (2024), Section Two, page 106 – 110. A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- the LADO does not consider the behaviour meets the 'risk of harm' threshold for a referral.

In cases where the concern is agreed to be a low-level concern, an internal investigation is completed, and any relevant next steps taken in line with the disciplinary policy and procedures.

Ensuring a robust internal investigation process allows for learning points and training needs to be identified, and where required disciplinary action to be taken.

Procedure Review Dates:

April 2023	C Brown / SLT
July 2023	C Brown / SLT
August 2023	C Brown / SLT
November 2023	C Brown / SLT
September 2024	C Brown / SLT
November 2024	C Brown / SLT

